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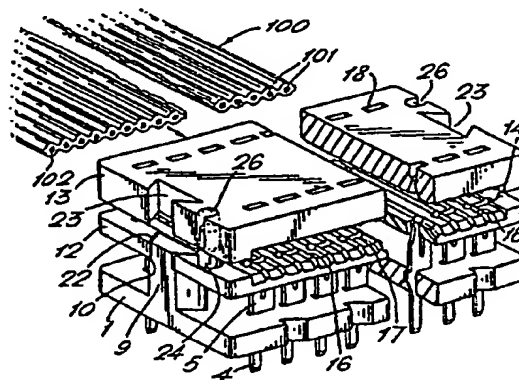
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54 Electrical connector for terminating multi-conductor flat flexible electrical cable.

57 The connector comprises a base member (1) carrying a plurality of terminals (5), and a two part (12,13) cover member by which a cable (100) is applied to the terminals (5), the base member (1) and the two parts (12,13) of the cover member being secured together in a condition which permits insertion of the cable (100) between the two parts (12,13) of the cover member with subsequent urging of the base member (1) and the two parts (12,13) of the cover member together to effect termination.

FIG.2.



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This invention relates to an electrical connector for terminating multi-conductor flat flexible electrical cable.

Multi-conductor flat flexible electrical cable  
5 generally comprises a plurality of spaced parallel co-planar conductors held in position by a surrounding web of electrically insulating material.

A difficulty which arises when terminating such cable is that the conductors of the cable are often  
10 not spaced at exactly the correct constant pitch distance, and thus when all the conductors are simultaneously connected to respective terminals of an electrical connector there is the possibility that some of the conductors will not be correctly connected  
15 or even not connected at all.

In order to overcome this difficulty electrical connectors for terminating such cable are known, which comprise a base member carrying a plurality of electrical terminals each having a conductor-connection  
20 portion comprising arms adapted to penetrate the insulation of a cable in order to establish an electrical connection between the terminal and the conductor, and a cover member by which a cable is applied to the terminals to effect the necessary connections,  
25 the cover member being formed with a passage to receive the cable, the passage being profiled to urge the conductors of the cable to adopt the correct pitch distance prior to termination, and with a plurality of holes arranged to receive the conductor-connection  
30 portions of the terminals respectively, each hole

being aligned with a conductor of a cable received in the cable-receiving passage of the cover member.

One such connector is disclosed in U.S. Patent Specification No. 3,816,818, in which connector -  
5 the cover member is formed of two parts adapted to be clamped about a cable, the parts having cable-engaging surfaces adapted to urge the conductors of the cable into the correct pitch distance spacing, prior to application of the cable and cover to the  
10 terminal-carrying base of the connector to complete termination.

This known connector suffers from the disadvantage that it comprises three separate parts which must be individually handled to effect  
15 termination, and the disadvantage that either the parts can be supplied to a user separately with the possibility of loss of one or more parts, or the parts can be supplied in an assembled state, in which case the user must first disassemble the parts prior  
20 to termination.

These disadvantages are partly overcome by the connector disclosed in U.S. Patent Specification No. 4,068,912, in which connector the two parts of the cover member are hingedly connected together  
25 at one end, the connector thus comprising only two separate parts instead of three.

However, this second known connector still has the supply disadvantage mentioned above, and also again requires a two-step termination operation,  
30 namely a first step of clamping the cable in the cover, and a second step of applying the cable and cover to the base carrying the terminals.

According to this invention there is provided an electrical connector for terminating multi-  
35 conductor flat flexible electrical cable, comprising

a base member carrying a plurality of electrical terminals each having a conductor-connection portion comprising arms adapted to penetrate the insulation of a cable in order to establish an electrical connection between the terminal and the conductor, and a cover member by which a cable is applied to the terminals to effect the necessary connections, the cover member being formed of two parts adapted to be clamped about a cable and which together define a passage to receive the cable, the passage being profiled to urge the conductors of the cable to adopt the correct pitch distance as the parts are clamped about the cable prior to termination, and with a plurality of holes arranged to receive the conductor-connection portions of the terminals respectively, each hole communicating with the cable-receiving passage and being aligned with a conductor of a cable received in the cable-receiving passage of the cover member, characterised in that the base member and the two parts of the cover member are provided with co-operating securing means adapted to secure the members together in superposed relationship in a first condition in which a cable can be inserted between the two parts of the cover member and a second condition in which the cable is clamped between the two parts of the cover member and the conductor-connection portions of the terminals carried by the base member have entered the holes in the cover member to establish the required electrical connections between the terminals and the conductors of the cable, the securing means being such that as the base member and the two parts of the cover member are urged from the first condition to the second condition they pass through an intermediate condition in which the two parts of the cover member have moved

relatively towards each other to clamp the cable between them but the conductor-connection portions of the terminals have not engaged the cable.

The connector of this invention has the advantages that it can be supplied to a user and used by the user as a single piece assembly in which the parts are at all times secured together, and that termination can be effected in a single step operation simply by inserting a cable between the two parts of the cover member, and then urging the parts together in a single stroke using, for example, a simple press, the securing means holding the parts of the assembly together providing the differential resistance to closing of the parts together required to effect satisfactory termination as set out.

An electrical connector according to this invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the drawings, in which:-

Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of the connector;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the connector in the assembled state prior to application to a cable which is also shown; and

Figures 3, 4 and 5 are sectional views through the connector and a cable at three successive stages in application of the connector to the cable.

The connector to be described is for use in terminating multi-conductor flat flexible electrical cable comprising a plurality of spaced parallel co-planar conductors held in position by a surrounding web of electrically insulating material. Such a cable 100 is shown in Figures 2 to 5, this cable 100 having a plurality of multi-strand

conductors 101 embedded in a web 102 of electrically insulating plastics material.

The connector comprises an elongate planar base member 1 moulded from electrically insulating plastics material and having two parallel rows of apertures 2 therein, each of which apertures 2 receives an electrical terminal 3 stamped from sheet metal. The terminals 3 are of known form, and each comprises a post portion 4 projecting from one major surface of the base member 1, and a conductor-connection portion 5 projecting from the opposite major surface of the base member 1. Each conductor-connection portion 5 comprises a pair of arms 6 defining a conductor-receiving slot 7, the free ends of the arms being pointed and having outwardly directed projections defining shoulders 8 facing the base member 1. The terminals 3 are retained in the holes 2 in the base member 1 by being an interference fit, the holes 2 being shaped (as shown in Figures 3 to 5) to prevent the terminals 3 being pushed out of the holes 2 as conductors 101 are pushed into the slots 7 in the terminals 3.

At each end the base member 1 is formed with an upstanding post 9 of trapezoidal cross-section and having a portion of reduced cross-section at its free end such that its non-parallel opposite sides have shoulders 10 facing the free end of the post 9. These sides are also bevelled off at the free end of the post 9.

The connector also comprises a cover member 11 formed of two elongate parts 12 and 13 moulded from electrically insulating plastics material and having opposed major surfaces which together define a cable-receiving passage 14

(Figure 2). As best seen in Figures 3 to 5, the surface of the part 13 is provided with a plurality of parallel flutes 15 arranged at the correct pitch distance for the conductor 101 of the cable 100, while the surface of the part 12 is formed with a plurality of rounded ribs 16 arranged opposite the ridges of the flutes 15 respectively. The two parts 12 and 13 of the cover member 11 are also formed with a plurality of aligned through holes 17 and 18, respectively, arranged to receive the conductor-connection portions 5 of the terminals 3 respectively. As clearly shown in Figures 3 to 5, each hole 18 in the cover part 13 is, in known manner, provided with a tapering portion 19 sized to urge the arms 6 of the associated terminal portion 5 together as they pass through this portion 19 of the hole 18, the tapering portion 19 opening into an enlarged portion 20 providing an annular shoulder 21 on to which the shoulders 8 on the terminal arms 6 can latch to secure the cover 11 to the terminals 3 and thus to the base member 1 (as clearly shown in Figure 5).

The ends of the cover member parts 12 and 13 are formed with trapezoidal shaped recesses 22 and 23 respectively, the recesses 22 in the portion 12 being sized to receive the reduced cross-section portions at the free ends of the posts 9 on the base member 1 in an interference fit thereby to secure the cover member portion 12 to the base member 1 resting on the shoulders 10 on the posts 9, as shown in Figures 2, 3 and 4, in which position the free ends of the arms 6 of the conductor-connection portions 5 project into but not through the associated holes 17 in the cover member part 12, as shown in Figure 3.

The cover member part 12 is formed at each end with an upstanding circular cross-section post 24 having two portions of mutually different diameter to provide an annular shoulder 25 facing the free end of the post 24. The cover member part 13 is formed at its ends with substantially circular cross-section recesses 26 positioned and sized to receive the smaller diameter portions of the posts 24 on the cover member part 12, in an interference fit thereby to secure the cover member part 13 to the part 12 resting on the shoulders 25 on the posts 24, as shown in Figures 2 and 3, the cover member parts 12 and 13 then together defining the cable receiving passage 14.

As described, the posts 9 and 24, and the associated recesses 22 and 26 together constitute co-operating securing means which enable the base member 1 and the cover member parts 12 and 13 to be secured together as a unitary assembly in a first condition shown in Figures 2 and 3, in which the cable 100 can be freely inserted between the two parts 12 and 13 of the cover member 11, that is into the cable-receiving passage 14.

This assembly can then be positioned between the plates 200 and 201 of a press, as shown in Figures 3, 4 and 5, and the press then operated to urge the base member 1 and the two parts 12 and 13 of the cover member 11 together.

The sizing of the posts 9 and 24 and the associated recesses 22 and 26 is such that during such operation, initially the posts 24 on the cover member part 12 are urged further into the recesses 26 in the cover member part 13, the recesses 26 expanding to allow the larger diameter



portions of the posts 24 to enter, such that the assembly reaches an intermediate condition, shown in Figure 4, in which the cable is clamped between the cover member parts 12 and 13. During this  
5 clamping the conductors 101 of the cable 100, which may, as shown in Figure 3, not be accurately spaced at the correct pitch distance spacing, are urged by the ribs 16 on the cover member part 12 into the flutes 15 in the cover member part 13  
10 such that the conductors 101 are at the correct pitch distance spacing when the clamping operation is completed, as shown in Figure 4.

After this clamping has been effected further pressure causes the posts 9 on the base member 1  
15 to be urged further into the recesses 22 in the cover member part 12, the recesses expanding to allow the larger cross-sectional portions of the posts 9 to enter, and the free ends of the posts 9 entering the recesses 23 in the cover member part 13.  
20 During this part of the operation the arms 6 of the conductor-connection portions 5 of the terminals 3 are urged through the insulating web 102 of the cable 100, and the conductors 101 of the cable become received in the slots 7 of the associated  
25 terminals 3, as shown in Figure 5, to establish the required electrical connections.

The assembly finally reaches a second condition shown in Figure 5 in which the cover member 11 is latched to the base member 1 by the  
30 shoulders 8 on the terminals 3 engaging the shoulders 21 in the holes 18 in the cover member part 13, as previously described, the connector then being secured clamped to the cable 100 with the required connections between the terminals  
35 3 and the conductors 101 of the cable 100

established.

Although in the connector described above the cover member parts 12 and 13 are separately moulded, it is otherwise possible for these parts to be moulded as an integral structure, the two parts 12 and 13 being joined by frangible flanges extending between the free ends of the posts 24 and the associated recesses 26. With such a construction the flanges would serve to secure the cover member parts 12 and 13 together in the first condition of the connector, there then being no need for the posts 24 to have shoulders thereon, or for the posts 24 to be interference fits in the recesses 26.

Claims:

1. An electrical connector for terminating multi-conductor flat flexible electrical cable, comprising a base member carrying a plurality of electrical terminals each having a conductor-connection portion comprising arms adapted to penetrate the insulation of a cable in order to establish an electrical connection between the terminal and the conductor, and a cover member by which a cable is applied to the terminals to effect the necessary connections, the cover member being formed of two parts adapted to be clamped about a cable and which together define a passage to receive the cable, the passage being profiled to urge the conductors of the cable to adopt the correct pitch distance as the parts are clamped about the cable, prior to termination, and with a plurality of holes arranged to receive the conductor-connection portions of the terminals respectively, each hole communicating with the cable-receiving passage and being aligned with a conductor of a cable received in the cable-receiving passage of the cover member, characterised in that the base member (1) and the two parts (12, 13) of the cover member (11) are provided with co-operating securing means (9, 22, 23 and 24, 26) adapted to secure the members (1 and 11) together in superposed relationship in a first condition (Figure 3) in which a cable (100) can be inserted between the two parts (12, 13) of the cover member (11) and a second condition (Figure 5) in which the cable (100) is clamped between the two parts (12, 13) of the cover member (11) and the conductor-connection portions (5) of the terminals (3) carried by the base member (1) have entered

the holes (17, 18) in the cover member (11) to establish the required electrical connections between the terminals (3) and the conductors (101) of the cable (100), the securing means (9, 22, 23 and 24, 26) being such that as the base member (1) and the two parts (12, 13) of the cover member (11) are urged from the first condition (Figure 3) to the second condition (Figure 5) they pass through an intermediate condition (Figure 4) in which the two parts (12, 13) of the cover member (11) have moved relatively towards each other to clamp the cable (100) between them but the conductor-connection portions (5) of the terminals (3) have not engaged the cable (100).

2. An electrical connector as claimed in Claim 1, characterised in that the securing means comprises upstanding posts (9) on the base member (1) and co-operating recesses (22, 23) in the two parts (12, 13) of the cover member (11), and upstanding posts (24) on one part (12) of the cover member (11) and co-operating recesses (26) in the other part (13) of the cover member (11), the posts (9, 24) being formed with shoulders (10, 25) which determine the relative positions of the base member (1) and the two parts (12, 13) of the cover member (11) in the first and intermediate conditions of the connector (Figures 3 and 4), the shoulders (25) on the posts (24) on the one part (12) of the cover member (11) being urged into the co-operating recesses (26) in the other part (13) of the cover member (11) as the connector passes from the first to the intermediate condition (Figure 3 to Figure 4), and the shoulders (10) on the posts (9) on the base member (1) being urged into the co-operating recesses (22, 23) in the two parts (12, 13) of the cover member (11).

as the connector passes from the intermediate to the second condition (Figure 4 to Figure 5).

3. An electrical connector as claimed in Claim 2, characterised in that the posts (9) on  
5 the base member (1) are trapezoidal in cross-section, and each has a portion of reduced cross-section at its free end such that the shoulders (10) on the post (9) are formed on the non-parallel  
10 opposite sides of the post (9) and facing the free end of the post (9).

4. An electrical connector as claimed in Claim 2 or Claim 3, characterised in that the posts (24) on the one part (12) of the cover member (11) are circular in cross-section, and each has a  
15 portion of reduced diameter at its free end such that an annular shoulder (25) is formed on the post and facing the free end of the post (24).

5. An electrical connector as claimed in Claim 1, characterised in that the two parts  
20 (12, 13) of the cover member (11) are formed as an integral structure joined by frangible portions serving as the securing means serving to secure the two parts (12, 13) together.

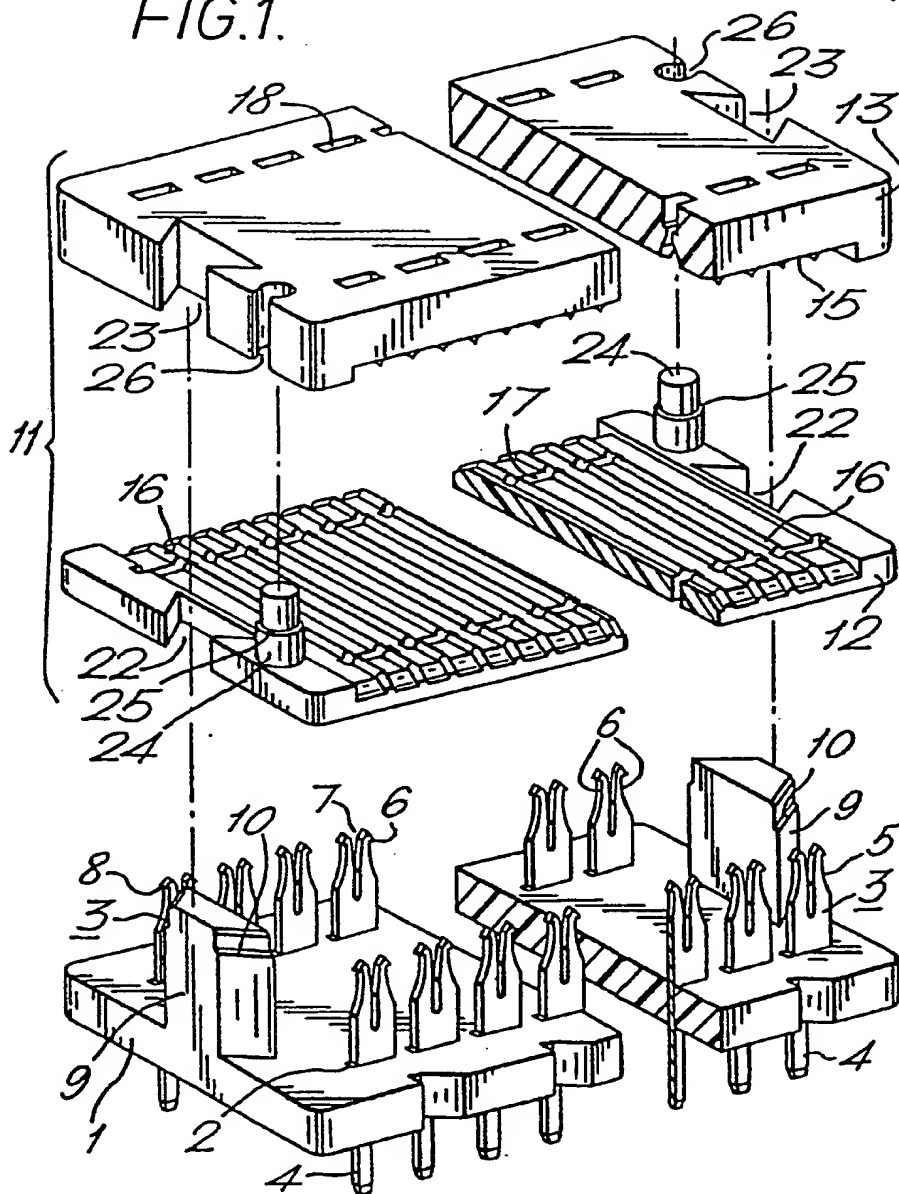
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FIG. 1.



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FIG.2.

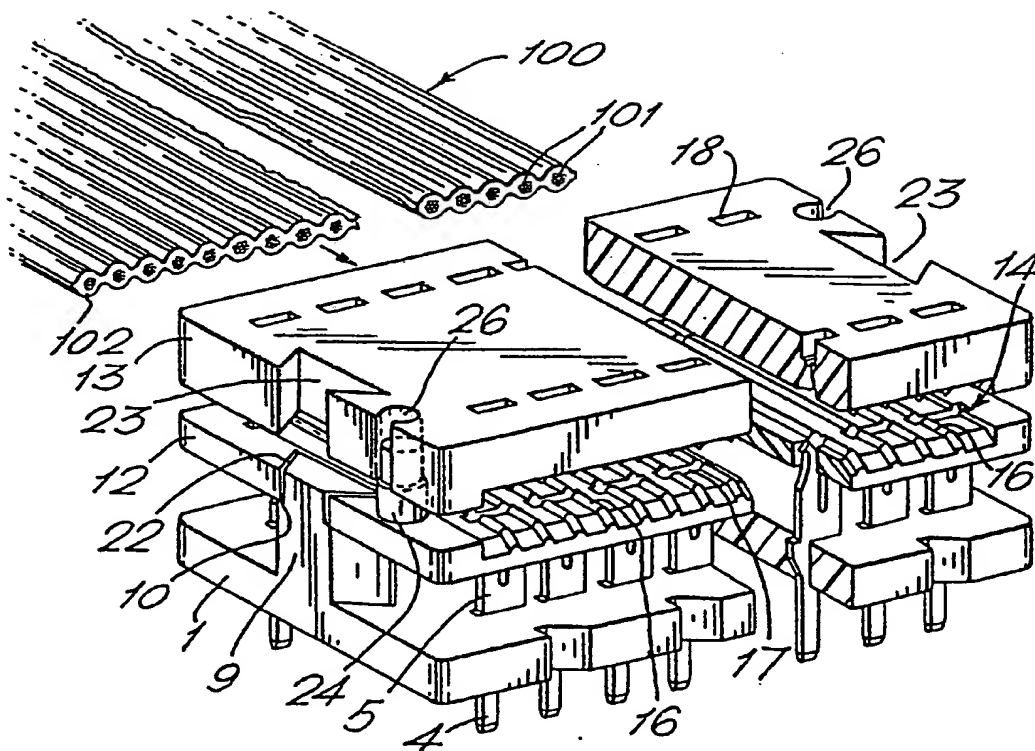


FIG.3.

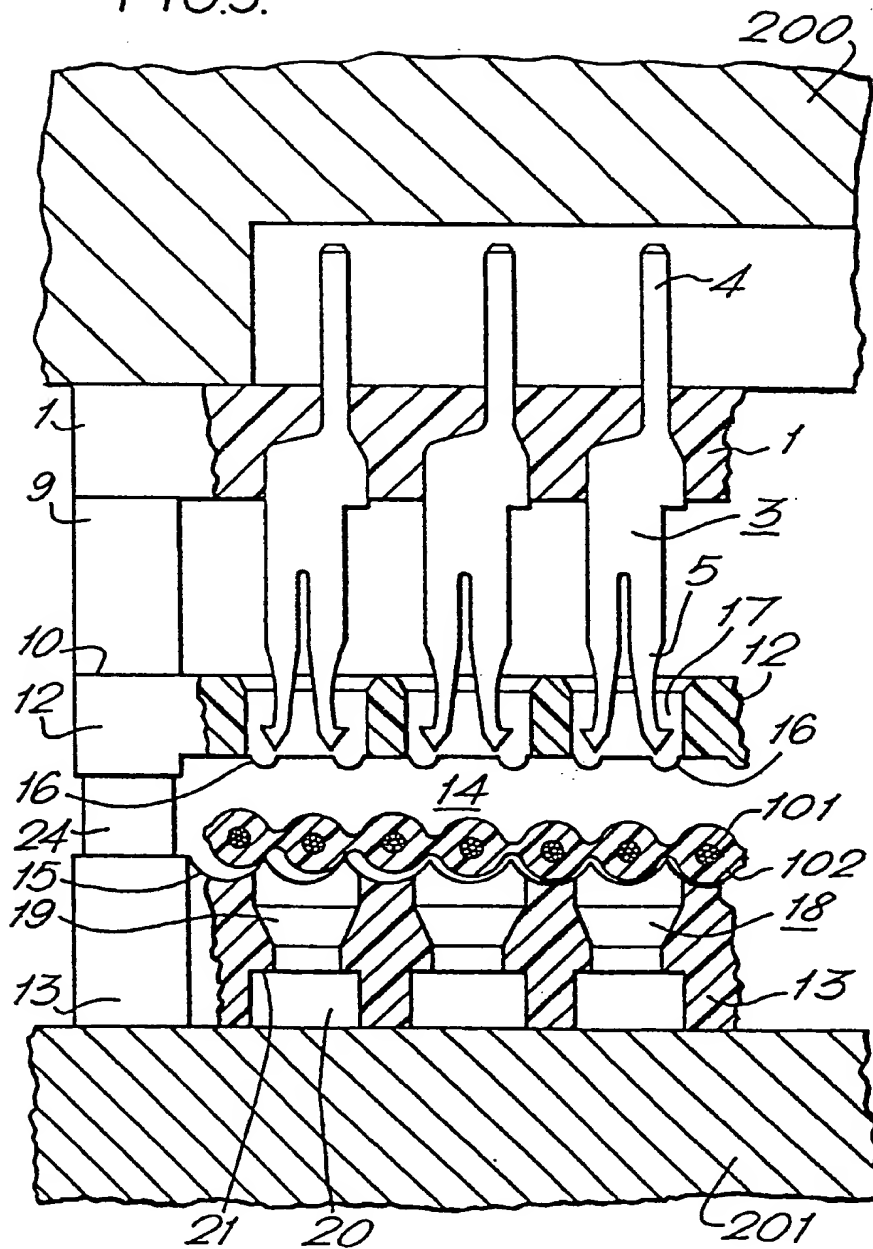
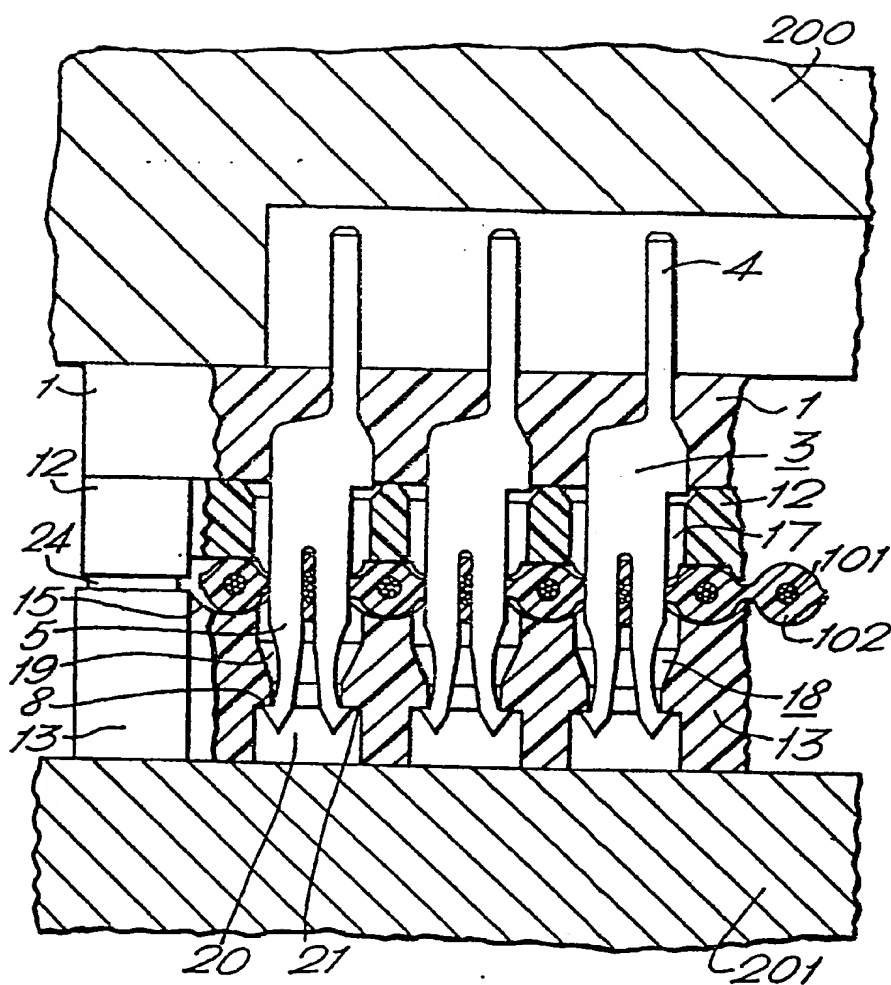






FIG.5.





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# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

0011923  
Application number

EP 79 302 311.0

| DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT  |   |  | CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.)   |
|--|---|--|--|
| Category   | Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages   | Relevant to claim                              |  |
|  | <u>US - A- 4 118 096 (TAKAHASHI)</u><br>* column 3, lines 13 to 20, column 4, line 54 to column 5, line 27;<br>fig. 3, 4, 9, 10 *               | 1,2  |  |
|  | <u>FR - A1 - 2 387 534 (BUNKER RAMO)</u><br>* page 4, line 33 to page 8, line 23, page 14, lines 9 to 19; fig. 1, 4, 6, 7 *                     | 1,2  |  |
|  | <u>DE - A1 - 2 541 441 (THOMAS &amp; BETTS)</u><br>* page 5, line 21 to page 6, line 30, page 7, line 33 to page 8, line 37; fig. 1, 4, 5, 10 * | 1,2  |  |
| A  | <u>US - A - 4 077 695 (BAKERMANS)</u><br>* abstract; fig. 2, 3, 9 to 12 *   |  |  |
| A  | <u>US - A - 4 009 921 (NAROZNY)</u><br>* claim 1; fig. 1 *  |  |  |
| A  | <u>DE - A - 2 355 774 (AMP)</u><br>* page 4, lines 23 to 28, page 7, lines 7 to 16; fig. 1 and 2 *  |  |  |
| D,A  | <u>US - A - 4 068 912 (HUDSON, JR. et al.)</u><br>* complete document *   |  |  |
|  |   |  | TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.)   |
|  |   |  | H 01 R 23/66<br>H 01 R 4/24<br><br>H 01 R 4/24<br>H 01 R 23/00<br>H 01 R 43/00   |
|  |   |  | CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS  |
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|  |   |  | &: member of the same patent family, corresponding document  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The present search report has been drawn up for all claims |   |  |  |
| Place of search<br>Berlin  |   | Date of completion of the search<br>12-02-1980 | Examiner<br>HAHN   |

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